DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 179 069 EC 122 179

AUTHOR Anderson, Stephen C.; And Others
TITLE [Innovative Services: The Use of Parent Aides in Child Protective Services]. Module 7. Supervision.
INSTITUTION Texas Univ., Austin. School of Social Work.
PUB DATE 79
NOTE 36p.; For related information, see EC 122 172-179
AVAILABLE FROM Resource Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, 2609 University, SWB 314, Austin, TX 78712 ($25.00 for printed materials only, $100.00 for entire package that includes printed and audio visual materials)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Role; *Child Abuse; Family Counseling; Family Problems; *Neglected Children; *Paraprofessional Personnel; Parent Education; Parent Participation; *Parent Workshops; *Program Administration; *Volunteers

ABSTRACT

The final module of a seven module package for child protective service workers addresses management system skills necessary to maintain a volunteer parent aide program for abused and neglected children and their families. Four program activities center on the following: (1) listing what the agency will provide the volunteer; (2) developing guidelines for volunteer case assignments; (3) developing guidelines for the volunteer's first visit with the family; (4) developing a plan for supervising volunteers; and (5) outlining a volunteer support system. Included are directions for using the media package and questions for discussion. (SBH)

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Module 7

Supervision

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Acknowledgements

We wish to convey our deeply-felt appreciation to all of the employees of the Texas Department of Human Resources who served on the Volunteer Curriculum Task Force in an advisory capacity and those who reviewed and critiqued these curriculum materials.

The willingness of the staff of the Travis County Lay Therapy Program, Family Focus in Belton, Texas, and Family Outreach of Richardson-Plano, Inc. to share their time and energy greatly enriched these training materials. We extend our gratitude to these innovative programs and to their staffs.

SCA
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Austin, 1979

Grant Information:

This project was supported through funds made available under Title XX regulations for grants to educational institutions from the Texas Department of Human Resources.

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Supervision

Overview

Leave your identity as a social work professional for a moment and imagine yourself volunteering as a parent aide in your own program. You are excited and nervous. Although you have volunteered before in other agencies, you have never committed as much time and as much emotional energy as you plan to commit now.

The training sessions were moving, especially the panel of parents who talked about their experiences with parent aides. You want to be able to help someone the way these parents have been helped. Tomorrow, for the first time, you will meet 'your' family.

Turn the page to see what happens.

The Forest!

Not just one wolf . . .but a wolf pack is laying in wait for you. They are hiding everywhere! Some of them are even waiting at places you expected to get help! List the dangers that could beset you in these seen places. Then turn the page to see the 'wolves' we have chosen to describe.

1. **Case Assignment**

Wolves: _____

_____

2. **The First Visit With The Family**

Wolves: _____

_____

3. **Working With The Family**

Wolves: _____

_____

4. **3 Months Into The Case**

Wolves: _____

_____

5. **6 Months Into The Case**

Wolves: _____

_____

6. **At Your Own Home**

Wolves: _____

_____

7. **At The Office**

Wolves: _____

_____

The Wolves

1. **The Hopeless Case**

It has been around the agency for 7 years. No progress has ever been reported.

2. **The Unprepared, Hostile Family**

They never heard of your program and never said they'd participate.

3. **Rejection/Manipulation**

Are you being "taken for a ride"? How should you respond? You need someone to help you sort this all out.

4. **Ignorance**

That initial training was great — but now you really have a lot of questions to ask!

5. **Isolation/Discouragement**

You never see the other volunteers and you think they must be doing a far better job than you are. The family you are working with is still making little progress.

6. **Resentment**

Your own family was unprepared for the demands that would be made on them — the phone calls in the middle of the night; the amount of time you would be spending away from them.

7. **Eek! Grandma! You too? Jealousy/Cold Shoulder**

Your supervisor is miffed — you have been filling out travel forms wrong for 3 months (you were only told the right way once during orientation). You have no signs that anyone appreciates what you do and the caseworkers act like you are after their jobs!

Exaggeration is one way to make a point. Most volunteers do not find the path as treacherous as the one we have just taken. Nonetheless, volunteers do need a substantial amount of guidance and support in their work. The professional can provide that support. Many professionals in volunteer programs throughout Texas and the country report that they enjoy the new role possibilites a volunteer component can offer. They cite the opportunities to learn supervisory skills, conduct training sessions, delve into current research, interact with other professionals in the community, and learn managerial skills, such as recruiting, screening and scheduling.

This module will address those management systems skills necessary to *maintain* a volunteer program.

Outcomes

At the end of this training module you will have:

1. Listed what the agency will provide the volunteer.
2. Developed guidelines for volunteer case assignments.
3. Developed guidelines for the volunteer's first visit with the family.
4. Developed a plan for supervising volunteers.
5. Outlined your volunteer support system.

Activities

1. Banishing the Wolves
2. Volunteer Case Assignment
3. What's It all About
4. Nitty-Gritty Issues

Banishing The Wolves

"As there are expectations of the Parent Aide, so also, there are expectations of the professional."

Thomas R. Sefcik, Coordinator
Project Children

Discussion

As an agency and as individuals, we can do much to banish the wolves that threaten the success of our volunteer parent aide program. Most agencies 'spell out' in writing what they will provide for the volunteer.

By imagining yourself as a parent aide in your own program, begin to anticipate what volunteers may need or want.

Directions

1. Working individually, list the answers to this question, "As a volunteer in a parent aide program I would need . . ."
2. When you are finished with your list, look over the "A Volunteer Has A Right To Expect" (from the agency and from the professional) . . . checklist. Working individually, check off those items you would like to be included in your own list.
3. Come back together as a group and share your own lists, and, after discussion, decide what you will write on your master list, "What We Will Provide The Volunteer."

As A Volunteer In a Parent Aide Program, I Would Need . . .

Directions

Complete this individually.

A Volunteer Has A Right To Expect . . .

Directions

Now, resume your professional identity. Look over this checklist. It lists both what the volunteer can expect from the agency and from the professional. This list is a compilation of materials from two programs (Goodwill Industries and Project Children). As you read, you will find that some items are important for your program and some are not. Check only the items that you think are important and should be included in your own list.

A Volunteer Has A Right To Expect . . .

From The Agency

- ☐ 1. To provide a Supervisor of Volunteers who will be responsible for hiring, firing, orientation, training and supervision of all volunteers. The Supervisor will be available to guide and assist volunteers during their scheduled working hours, and will serve as the link between the volunteers and the Agency's paid staff.
- ☐ 2. To furnish a written job description for each position open to volunteers, with appropriate information concerning desirable experience, skills, and education.
- ☐ 3. To train volunteers to a level that will permit them to begin their work confidently.
- ☐ 4. To continue the volunteers' training, either within the Agency or elsewhere, to whatever extent is necessary to maintain continuing competence.
- ☐ 5. To provide volunteers with working conditions equal to those of paid employees doing similar work, including space, equipment, and supplies.
- ☐ 6. To make written evaluations of volunteers' performance on the job at suitable and regular intervals, including the number of hours worked.
- ☐ 7. To offer volunteers promotion to more responsible jobs within the Agency's volunteer program, if desired.
- ☐ 8. To include volunteers in Agency staff conferences when possible and otherwise to promote full understanding among the volunteers of the Agency's workings and decisions.
- ☐ 9. To reimburse volunteers directly for out-of-pocket expenses required by their work, and to provide indirect benefits such as day care when these are available to Agency employees.
- ☐ 10. To provide volunteers with a certificate of service for satisfactory work, and to supplement the certificate with a detailed recommendation if requested by a volunteer applying for a job elsewhere.
- ☐ 11. To maintain adequate public liability and other insurance coverage of volunteers during those hours when they are actually working for the Agency.
- ☐ 12. To indemnify volunteers for any cost, damage, or expense arising from the activities authorized by the Agency.
- ☐ 13. To create a Volunteer Advisory Council consisting of the Agency's Executive Director, the Supervisor of Volunteers, one other Agency staff member and two volunteers, and to schedule regular meetings of the Council.

from *How to Assure Responsible Volunteering in a Rehabilitation Facility.* Vol. 11 of Volunteers in Rehabilitation. Prepared by Goodwill Industries of America, Inc. for the

Rehabilitation Services Administration, Social and Rehabilitation Services, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1973. Exhibit IV-3 of Kirschner Associates, Inc. *Reaching Out: The Volunteer In Child Abuse And Neglect* by Nancy Fisher. Draft I.

From The Professional

- ☐ 1. The parent must be interested in working with a volunteer, and this interest must be expressed. This cannot be assumed. If the interest is not expressed, the parent aide can be wasting a great deal of time trying to convince the parent that there is a need for this type of help.
- ☐ 2. In talking with the parent aide prior to acceptance of the case, the professional should inform the volunteer of *any pertinent information* relevant to the aide's involvement, i.e., mother has an alcoholic, physically abusive boyfriend; parent abuses drugs, etc. A release of information might be used in this area.
- ☐ 3. The problems, goals and objectives that are explained to the volunteer *must be the same as* those that have been and will be explained to the parent. There should be no "Hidden Agendas." The parent will ask at some point what the reason is for the aide's visits, and this would place the volunteer in a difficult position if the reason for her involvement is not already clear to everyone.
- ☐ 4. The first meeting between the parent and parent aide is the most awkward. The professional is expected to participate in this meeting, to *introduce* the two individuals, to again *explain the reason for the volunteer's involvement,* the *role* of the volunteer, and the *goals* that they will be working toward. The professional should remain at least half an hour, or until the parent and parent aide feel comfortable with each other. Do Not just introduce these individuals and leave.
- ☐ 5. The professional should *keep in contact* with the parent aide on a bi-weekly basis. At times, it might be beneficial to have the parent included in these evaluation sessions to discuss any problems or progress that has been made. This is especially true if the parent is going through a crisis period.
- ☐ 6. The sharing of pertinent information is *essential,* on both the part of the parent aide and the professional. In most cases, the information obtained on the referral form is only valid for one or two months. Also, very quickly the volunteer has more information about the parent than the professional. In order to work effectively and efficiently with the parent, the professional and parent aide must communicate with one another.
- ☐ 7. As in any type of volunteer work, commitment to the program varies. If things do not work out the way you would like, talk to the volunteer and/or parent and discover why. If necessary, remove the volunteer from the case.
- ☐ 8. In a few cases, the parent "agrees" superficially to have an aide involved, but is not cooperative, and sabotages the pairing. If the first pairing does not

work, a second volunteer *may* be assigned, if requested. The professional should evaluate again the need for a parent aide.

- ☐ 9. It is imperative that the professional explain to the parent the role of the volunteer and the reasons for her involvement. Again, this should be *specific* and *truthful*. If child abuse, inappopriate use of discipline, or child mismanagement is involved, then that is what should be stated . . . not just that this person will be a "friend" to the parent.
- ☐ 10. The information that is obtained by the parent aide and given to the professional should be *confidential* and, in most cases, *not* communicated back to the parent (by the professional). Doing so might severely limit the future involvement of the parent aide with the parent.

By Thomas R. Sefcik, A.C.S.W., Coordinator, Project Children

What We Will Provide The Volunteer

Directions

As a group, discuss and compare the items you included in "As A Volunteer In A Parent Aide Program I Would Need . . ." and the checklist, "A Volunteer Has A Right To Expect . . .".

Decide which items you will include in your own statement, "What We Will Provide The Volunteer." Write it here.

Volunteer Case Assignment

"When a new case comes in I just look around the office to see who's there and if I can find someone I say, 'You're the one'."

An anonymous Volunteer Supervisor being facetious.

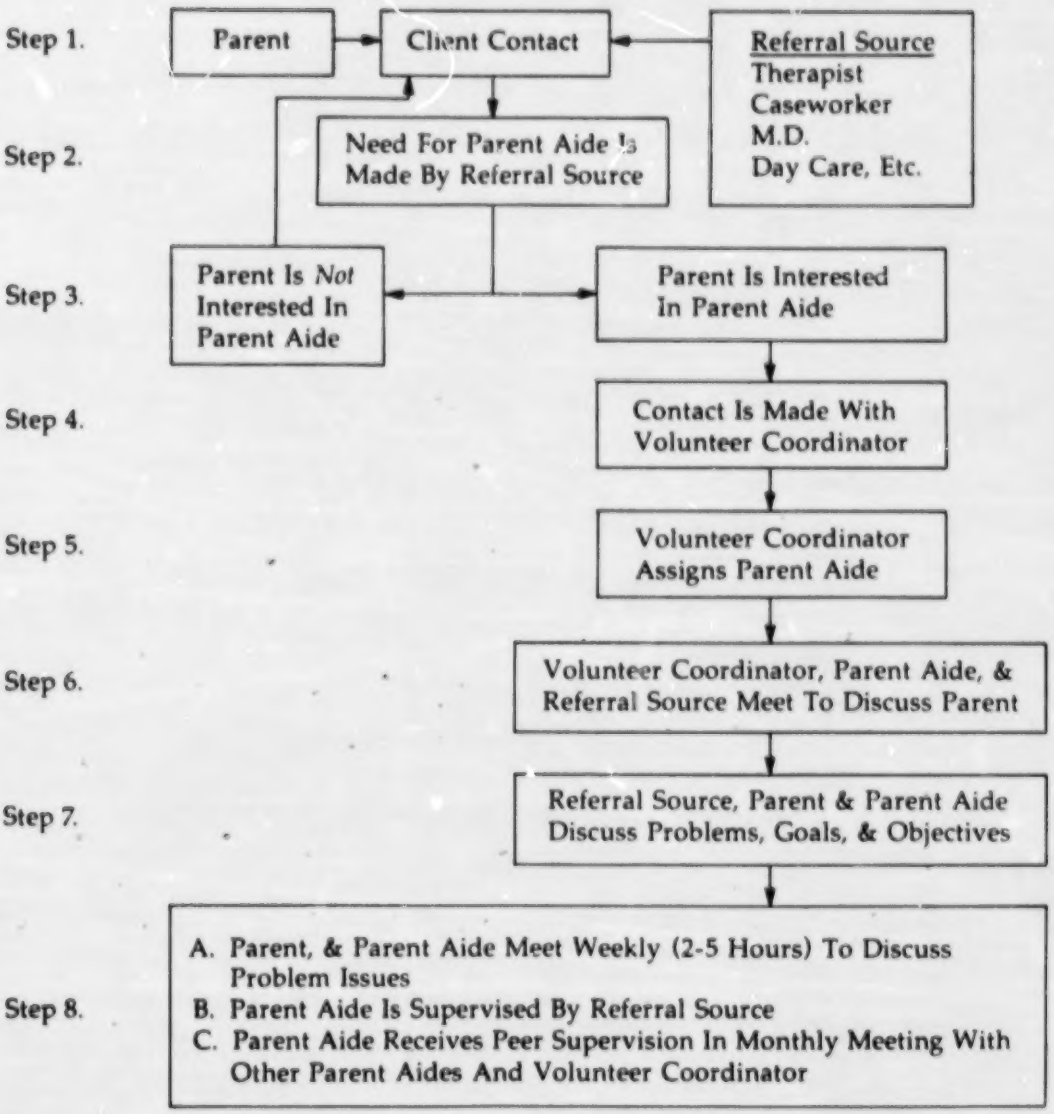
Discussion

A well thought out plan for assigning volunteers adds efficiency and effectiveness to your program. If the case assignment process is clear, then you avoid unnecessary delays in assigning volunteers. And if you spend suffcient time matching volunteers and clients, a better rapport, and hopefully, greater success will follow. These two exercises are designed to help you develop an efficient and effective case assignment process.

Directions

1. Working in pairs, read over and critique the "Project Children" case assignment flow chart. 'Red pencil' it and revise it so that it could work in your situation.
2. Then come back together as a group and come up with an assignment flow chart for your own program.
3. As a group, look over the three forms developed by the Child Protection Team at the University of Kansas Medical Center. These are typical of forms used by other programs. You may want to use or adapt these.
4. Turn to the page entitled "Matching" and follow the directions there.

Project Children
Parent Aide Program
Assignment Flow Chart


Step 1.
Parent
Client Contact
Referral Source
Therapist
Caseworker
M.D.
Day Care, Etc.
Step 2.
Need For Parent Aide Is Made By Referral Source
Step 3.
Parent Is *Not* Interested In Parent Aide
Parent Is Interested In Parent Aide
Step 4.
Contact Is Made With Volunteer Coordinator
Step 5.
Volunteer Coordinator Assigns Parent Aide
Step 6.
Volunteer Coordinator, Parent Aide, & Referral Source Meet To Discuss Parent
Step 7.
Referral Source, Parent & Parent Aide Discuss Problems, Goals, & Objectives
Step 8.
A. Parent, & Parent Aide Meet Weekly (2-5 Hours) To Discuss Problem Issues
B. Parent Aide Is Supervised By Referral Source
C. Parent Aide Receives Peer Supervision In Monthly Meeting With Other Parent Aides And Volunteer Coordinator

Assignment Flow Chart

Directions

Draw an assignment flow chart for your own program.

Assignments

Directions

Look over these three forms developed by the Child Protection Team at the University of Kansas Medical Center. They may be helpful in developing your own forms. Optional: Revise them to meet your own needs.

1. "Agreement for Assignment of Parent Aide," given to parent(s) to sign.
2. "Child Protection Team Staffing Report Parent Aide Assignment," internal record to keep track of cases referred to program.
3. "Lay Therapy Assignments," internal record.

Agreement For Assignment Of Parent Aide

We _____ have discussed
(name of parent or parents)
the parent Aide Program and agree to having a parent aide assigned by the Child Protection Team and _____ to our family.

We further agree that the above-named agency may discuss information concerning our family which it has in its files with the parent aide. It is also understood that the parent aide and the professional staff at the above-named agency will share information and planning to meet the needs of our family. This agreement may be terminated after mutual discussion among the people involved.

Date: _____ Signed _____
(parent)

Signed _____
(for agency)

(Please Fill Out In Duplicate. One Copy to Be Kept In Agency Files And One In CPT Parent Aide Files.)

Child Protection Team Staffing Report
Parent Aide Assignment

Mother's Name: _____ Age: _____

Father's Name: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Children:	Name	Birthdate and Age
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____

Referred by: _____ Agency phone no. _____

Other treatment personnel: _____

Background information: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Accepted for Parent Aide Program: ☐

Not Accepted: ☐ Reason:

Lay Therapy Assignments

Agency _____

Family Name And Address	Children's Names And Ages	Agency Supervisor	Lay Therapist	Date Assigned	Date Closed

Matching Criteria

Directions

Locate the manila envelope labeled "Matching Cases." Take out the two decks. Lay the case cards out on the table, and working in a group, choose the volunteer who would be the worst match for the case. Try to use only one volunteer for each case.

When you have created the worst possible matches, answer the Discussion Questions.

Discussion Questions

1. What factors seem to be the most important when matching clients and cases? The least important?

2. How could a careless match between the volunteer and the clients interfere with the progress of the case?

3. List some guidelines that might insure a good match.

Matching Criteria

Directions

Write down criteria which you will use for matching clients and cases.

What's It All About?

"I remembered deliberately going to my supervisor for strokes when my ego was shattered. And, God love her, she gave me what I needed."

Rita Clubbs of SCAN of Arkansas

Discussion

Supervision speaks both to the mind and to the heart. It involves both giving instruction and consultation as well as providing encouragement. There are, then, two sets of questions the supervisor must ask her/himself. First, instructional questions: Which insturctional strategies work well in supervision? How much information should be given? In what order?

Second, attitudinal quetsions: What are the affective or attitudinal messages that are most helpful? What can be said or implied to people that will aid them in getting a job done?

This activity will begin to answer both sets of questions by asking you to reflect on your own past supervision experiences.

Directions

Individually, spend a few moments recalling a supervision experience which helped you to achieve a difficult goal. This supervision could have occurred at any point in your life and may be work related or may be the supervision you received in learning how to drive a car or bake a cake.

Try to remember how you were instructed. How fast or slowly did you receive information? Were you told exactly how to do the task? Given hints? Asked to discover it for yourself? Were you given instruction only if you asked?

Now think about the affective or attitudinal part of the supervision. What was the major spoken or unspoken message you received from your supervisor? How did this person deal with your discouragements? Your 'off' times?

Each person will spend 3-5 minutes recounting his/her experience to the group. (Your group should have 3-5 people).

When every person has finished his/her account, individually complete the form "A Helpful Supervisor."

Then answer the discussion questions.

A Helpful Supervisor . . .

Directions

Based on your own supervisory experience and those of others in your group, work individually to fill in these statements. Then, as a group, answer the discussion questions.

A Helpful Supervisor . . .

Does.....

Doesn't.....

Acts Like.....

Believes.....

Gives Instruction When .....

Intervenes When.....

Uses Humor And Laughter When .....

Is Very Serious When .....

Teaches By .....

Assumes That .....

Doesn't Assume That.....

Asks.....

Discussion Questions

1. Compare your responses to A Helpful Supervisor. Do you find much similarity?

2. Which supervisor traits, attitudes, and behaviors promote a successful outcome?

3. What attitudes and behaviors are dependent upon the person who is being supervised?

Answer This By Yourself

4. Describe the kind of supervisor you would like to be.

Nitty-Gritty Issues

"A teammate is someone you can practice on and they still like you."
Student at Barber's College

Discussion

Some of the actions and interventions of an effective supervisor have already been described. This next activity will give you a chance to practice supervising a parent aide. A role play situation will give you a chance to try out supervisory behaviors in a setting where risks can be taken without affecting your relationship with the volunteers.

Each person in your group will have a chance to role play a supervisor and to role play a parent aide. Each supervisor will be assisted by a team of "consultants" (the remaining members of your group).

*In this activity the parent aide will describe a situation or present a problem, and the supervisor, after consulting with the other members of your group, will respond to the aide. This will give each member of the group a chance to experience supervision from the aide's viewpoint and an opportunity to think about some of the most common supervision situations.

Choose one person in your group to start the role play as a parent aide. Give this person role play card no. 1. The 'parent aide' should sit facing the 'supervisor.' The supervisory consultants will sit behind the supervisor (see diagram).

Directions

Follow this sequence of events:

A. *Parent Aide* reviews green role play card and talks to supervisor.
B. *Supervisor* discusses problem/situation with *Supervisory Consultants* and decides how to respond to a parent aide.
C. Supervisor responds to parent aide.

Now end the role play by leaving your roles and following these steps:

D. Aide talks about how the response felt . . . was it helpful? condescending? etc.
E. Read the page "Possible Strategies/Considerations" for Card No. 1.
F. Optional: Replay the role play, trying a different strategy.

When you have finished these six steps, change roles with new persons playing the supervisor and parent aide and repeat this sequence with the remaining cards.

When you have finished, answer the discussion questions on supervision.

Card No. 1

Possible Strategies/Considerations

Tell the parent aide that she has much to offer the family. She has learned a great deal during her life as friend, parent, spouse, and can use this learning to help the family she works with. She will not have 'all the answers,' but then neither do psychologists, psychiatrists, or others who work with abusive families.

Make sure that she is 'desensitized' to whatever living styles or conditions she might encounter. She cannot act accepting and warm if she feels horrified.

You, her supervisor, should accompany her on her first visit with the family, spend at least half an hour there with her, and during that time remind the family that the parent aide is under legal obligation to report any cases of abuse.

Depending on your program, you may use the first visit to review the goals of the parent-aide relationship or simply as a get-acquainted time. Those parent aide programs which have a written list which describes what constitutes progress or success in the case generally use this time for parent aide, parent and caseworker to review this list of goals together. Other programs instruct aides not to go into a case with specific change agendas for the parents with the understanding that the parents may begin to make changes on their own once they feel better about themselves.

Clearly describe to the parents your own future involvement with their family.

Card No. 2

Possible Strategies/Considerations

During the first weeks the parent aide and the family make many decisions and set precedents. The clients may either be suspicious and hesitant to get involved or, like this client, accomodating and willing to go along with anything.

Supervision in this case might center around helping the parent aide acquire a broader perspective of her case. Without adequate perspective she may give more than she can afford to (over-give) and need to pull back from the parent at later, crucial times. She needs to learn to pace herself. You might help her by having her predict what she'll be doing 3 months later with the family if she continues on her present course at her same pace; then 6 months later; then a year. In this way, she can begin to realize that permanent changes may come slowly.

You might also role play 'backsliding' on the part of the family. How will she react? How will she feel about herself? About them?

This is also a time to review what activities she has done with the family. Excessive driving, babysitting, etc., can be unproductive and can cause her to feel exploited later. You might review techniques for setting limits.

Some programs assign a second case to prevent aides from becoming engulfed in their current case.

Card No. 3

Possible Strategies/Considerations

The testing period usually occurs during this part of the aide-parent relationship. The parent loses momentum to make changes and falls back into old behavior patterns. The aide becomes discouraged and feels exploited. At this time the supervisor should listen to the aide and give her a chance to ventilate feelings. Try to reflect feelings as well as content, i.e., as parent aide talks about her actions — drawing back, seeing family less — supervisor might comment on aide's feelings: "It sounds like you are feeling some doubts about your abilities to help."

This also might be a time to remind her about how difficult it is to sustain changes with the expectations of others upon you. If you fall back to old behaviors, you not only feel bad about that, but have the added burden of realizing you have let someone down.

The parent aide may be giving the parent the message, "I like you as long as you're making changes." This might be a time to help the parent aide distinguish between the message "I like you all the time but sometimes I don't like what you do," and "I don't like you when you do that."

Card No. 4

Possible Strategies/Considerations

There is a danger that the parent aide will abandon the family just when they begin to make real changes. The aide may want to terminate the case and move on to another one.

The supervisor can help the parent aide to see that she might be punishing the family for growing by removing her time and attention from them. The family will still need support and encouragement for their positive changes.

At this time the supervisor might assign a second case so that the parent aide again feels challenged.

Card No. 5

Possible Strategies/Considerations

The demanding role of the parent aide requires great skill in setting priorities. The parent aide's family will, in many cases, feel 'put upon' and irritated by the intrusions.

The supervisor can do a number of things:

1. Never urge the aide to choose her client family over her own family. A parent aide who, because of her involvement in the volunteer program, begins to suffer marital

or familial problems of her own does no one a favor. In the end, she, her family and the clients would be better off if she had her priorities clearly in place.

2. Help her see that her family might have legitimate complaints and that she may have to cut back on the services she provides to client families.
3. Some programs involve the spouse of each parent aide during the training. In this way, the spouse has a better 'feeling' for the program and is more likely to be supportive of the aide's efforts.
4. To avoid conflicts, some programs screen out applicants with pre-school age children, with full-time jobs and with unstable marriages.

Card No. 6

Possible Strategies/Considerations

The urge to 'get the families together' sometimes becomes irresistible. Some dangers exist that the parent aide should know about in advance of tomorrow's picnic.

First, the issue of jealousy arises. The focus of the parent aide's job centers around the client parent. If watching over two sets of children requires too much time, then the parent may feel slighted. This may lead to jealousy and a set-back in the aide-parent relationship.

Second, if the children do not get along with each other, it may be slightly harder for the parent and parent aide to work together in the future.

Third, the possible economic discrepancy between the parent aide and the client may become especially obvious and possibly complicate their relationship. Many programs suggest that the parent aide avoid inviting the client to visit in her own home. The supervisor offers to play the 'bad guy'; the one who does not allow the visit and therefore takes the pressure off the parent aide.

Supervision Discussion Questions

1. Which of the role play issues was most difficult to resolve? Why do you think so?

2. Was individual supervision the best mode for dealing with the issues which arose during the role play? Would group supervision have been a better choice for some of the situations? Which ones? Why do you think so?

3. Would all of these issues lend themselves to supervision over the telephone? Under what circumstances is supervision over the telephone satisfactory? In which circumstances would it not be satisfactory?

4. How could a supervisor assure that an aide will bring up critical issues so they can be discussed before they become too great a problem?

5. Should any of these role play issues have been brought up during in-service training?

Supervision Plan

Directions

Based on your discussion of supervision and supervision strategies, develop a supervision plan. This plan should include:

1. Types of supervision available to volunteers (i.e., group, individual, in-service);
2. Frequency of supervision sessions ("We will hold one group supervision session every two weeks and one in-service . . ."); and
3. Minimum attendance for each volunteer (every parent aide is expected to attend at least one individual and two group supervision sessions each month).

Farewell

"You've got to walk that lonesome highway.
You've got to walk it by yourself"

You have finished the training package. Now you are on your own to carry out your volunteer program.

One important aspect of any new program — evaluation — has not been mentioned, so far. Evaluation is critical for any program and needs to be addressed. It should be 'tackled' with professional help, however. Within the Department of Human Resources the Planning Division should be invaluable in developing an evaluation plan. Some brief guidelines and an example of an evaluation can be found in the Participant's Guide in the evaluation Section.

Your next month's journey is an exciting one. Although we cannot travel with you, we wish you our best!

References

Module 7

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